



Checklist to Determine the Need for Elder Care or Senior Living Services



SIGHT - Looking at the senior's appearance can be a sign that they are being limited either physically or mentally from completing otherwise normal daily tasks.

- Are they wearing clothing with food stains?
- Is their hair completely combed?
- Do their teeth appear clean?
- Does she continue to wear makeup?
- How do their shoes look?
- Is the house orderly and clean?

SOUND – Listening to what and how seniors speak can tell you a lot about their current mental status. Don't assume that "old age" is causing these problems; doing so can sometimes cause their mental state to decrease further.

- Do they call you by name?
- Are they speaking normally?
- Are they up on the news?
- Have they continued their outside activities?
- Do they have future plans or goals?
- If not, could they be depressed?

SMELL – Using your nose as an indicator can help you determine if your family member is bathing properly, participating in otherwise normal activities (cleaning their house), or whether or not they are eating regularly (if they have spoiled food in their kitchen).

- Does their living environment possess any unpleasant odors?
- Does the refrigerator or cupboards smell?
- Are the plants thriving?
- Is there an unusual amount of garbage, clutter, dust, or dirt?

TASTE – Tasting their food and sorting through their medications can help you determine if they are eating healthy or even worse, taking expired medicine.

- Do they have fresh and stocked pantry items?
- Look at the expiration dates. How does the food taste?
- Does the person appear to move around the kitchen safely?
- Are there many different prescriptions?
- Do the medications come from different doctors or pharmacies?
- What about the expiration dates on the medications?

TOUCH – A simple hug could tell you that your family member is fragile, losing weight and putting him or herself in jeopardy of injury or even malnourishment from not eating properly.

- Do they appear healthy?
- Touch their skin - is it soft, supple and is the color normal?
- Do they have unusual tearing or bruising of the skin?
- Are they losing weight?
- How are their sight, hearing and taste?

This information is brought to you by Comfort Keepers. For more information, please contact your local office.